

HOUSE BILL 1489

By Brooks H

AN ACT to name the new high school to be constructed for the Tennessee School for the Deaf in honor of Alan J. Mealka.

WHEREAS, Alan J. Mealka was raised in the Midwest but has called East Tennessee his home for twenty years; and

WHEREAS, Alan Mealka earned a bachelor's degree from Indiana State University, a master's degree from Ball State University, and a doctor of jurisprudence from Indiana University; and

WHEREAS, Alan Mealka served at the Indiana School for the Deaf first as a houseparent, then as a teacher, a dean of students, and an assistant superintendent; and

WHEREAS, Alan Mealka served as the superintendent of the North Dakota School for the Deaf, the dean of instruction at Ivy Tech State College, and as the director of special instruction for the State of Indiana, where he reported directly to the governor; and

WHEREAS, Alan Mealka began his tenure as the superintendent of the Tennessee School for the Deaf in January of 1996 and has since spearheaded statewide workshops, expanded parent services, and established a family learning weekend for the education and advancement of deaf and hard of hearing students and their families; and

WHEREAS, Alan Mealka's endeavors have been instrumental in providing programs for students from early childhood through the postsecondary transition phase, and he can boast of a one hundred percent (100%) placement rate for students upon graduation; and

WHEREAS, Alan Mealka greatly improved the residential component of the Tennessee School for the Deaf, providing a secure, family-like environment for students, and was

instrumental in providing students with the opportunity to return to their homes across the State of Tennessee on a weekly basis; and

WHEREAS, as the result of Alan Mealka's unwavering determination, funding was obtained for numerous projects on the campus of the Tennessee School for the Deaf, including life safety projects, projects funded through the Americans with Disabilities Act, the renovation of the Old Gym, and the enhancement of the grounds and property of the campus; and

WHEREAS, Alan Mealka is a man of integrity who consistently puts the needs of students above those of his own, and after devoting forty-five years of his life to educating deaf and hard of hearing students, he will be missed by students, faculty members, and others who have benefited from his good works; and

WHEREAS, Alan Mealka dedicated his life and his career to improving the lives of deaf and hard of hearing students, and he is especially deserving of recognition from the people of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. The new high school to be constructed on the campus of the Tennessee School for the Deaf located in the city of Knoxville shall be named "The Alan J. Mealka Building" in honor of Alan J. Mealka for his lifetime of service educating and improving the lives of students with hearing impairments.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.